

TRIBUTE TO MR. NICK GEORGE  
BRONZAN

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2005*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mr. Nick George Bronzan of Fresno, California. He is survived by his wife, Peggy, two daughters, Mary and Ann, and son Bruce.

Mr. Bronzan lived a life of honor, compassion and sincere loyalty to those he cared for and to the causes for which he fought.

Born in Stockton, California, Nick spent his childhood in Manteca. Upon graduation from high school, he attended California State University, Fresno and was a Bulldog academically and competitively as the captain of the Fresno State football team. Colleagues recall him as being a real leader and remember him being more interested in the condition and lives of the players than in winning the game.

After graduating from Fresno State in 1939, Mr. Bronzan spent five years as the Kerman High School coach in various sports and teaching mathematics. He worked for 4 years in the Fresno Young Men's Christian Association before becoming the executive secretary of the YMCA in Southern California. Finally settling in Fresno, Mr. Bronzan took a job as the executive director of the Central Valley YMCA in 1968.

Mr. Bronzan was a longtime advocate for youth, seniors, and foster children. He fought for the rights of those who could not fight for themselves. Not only did he work for the foster grandparents program but also served as its director. Mr. Bronzan volunteered alongside others older than 60 to work with children lacking parents and families. He was a member of the Fresno Rotary Club and was elected chairman of the Fresno-Madera Counties Service Area Task Force. His contributions helped develop the Area Agency on Aging for those two counties and in 1984 he was reappointed to the California Commission on Aging and Long-Term Care.

Mr. Bronzan served his community in more ways than one. Although his passing brings sadness to his family, Nick Bronzan's memory will forever live on in the lives of the many people he touched.

PROVIDING THAT HAMAS AND  
OTHER TERRORIST ORGANIZA-  
TIONS SHOULD NOT PARTICI-  
PATE IN ELECTIONS HELD BY  
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 14, 2005*

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 575, expressing the sense of Congress that Hamas should not participate in elections held by the Palestinian Authority.

Now, many of my colleagues might suggest that my opposition to this non-binding resolution means that I stand with the terrorists. I would argue that it means exactly the oppo-

sition. You see, Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I want to see peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. I want a free and democratic Palestinian state to stand side by side with the free and democratic Israeli state. And most importantly, I want both states and their peoples to be safe and secure.

For the first time, the Palestinians are engaging in a truly democratic process. I would defer to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian people on how to do this. Mr. Speaker, I have to be honest with you, I do not want foreign leaders telling the United States how to conduct our elections and I think we owe President Abbas and the Palestinian people the same courtesy.

In fact, this is one of the rare occasions that I actually agree with the Bush Administration. On September 20th, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in response to a question regarding Hamas being a part of the election, "... we understand that the Palestinian political system is in transition, that it is in transition toward a democratic system, and that has to be a Palestinian process." Secretary Rice went on to say, "This is going to be a Palestinian process and I think we have to give the Palestinians some room for the evolution of their political system."

We need to vest Hamas in the democratic process.

I want to be clear, Mr. Speaker, terrorism is wrong and it should not be tolerated.

However, if Hamas is brought into the process and given the opportunity to run for political office and become part of the political establishment, they will assume responsibility for governance—leading to moderation.

I would submit for the RECORD a statement by Debra DeLee, President and CEO of Americans for Peace Now. Ms. DeLee nicely lays out the position that Palestinian Authority President Abbas is in and why it is important for the elections to go forward in a way that is inclusive in order to moderate those who traditionally turned to terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I find myself in the interesting position of voting against this resolution and agreeing with Secretary Rice: the United States must let the Palestinians find their way to a democratic state.

#### THE SHARONIZATION OF HAMAS

(By Debra DeLee)

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent statement that he would withhold Israeli cooperation from Palestinian legislative elections in January if Hamas candidates take part flies in the face of his own experience with the moderating influence that holding public responsibility can have on extremist views. In explaining his 180 degree turn from being a strong advocate of Israeli settlements in Gaza to the driving force behind their evacuation, Sharon has repeatedly observed that, "what you see from here [in the Prime Minister's Office], you don't see from there." In other words, it was not until he obtained a position of ultimate responsibility for Israel that Sharon began to recognize the burden that the Gaza settlements imposed on the state.

There is no equivalence between the horrific terrorist acts that Hamas has inflicted on Israelis and Sharon's passion for settlement expansion.

Yet it's clear that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is trying to rein in his Islamist opposition through the process of Sharonization (i.e., co-opting the militants by encouraging them to run for public office

and to assume responsibility for governance, in the hope that this process will lead to their moderation.)

In an ideal world, Abbas would decide to round up Palestinian terrorists, place a call to his Interior Minister, then sit back to watch the thugs put in prison or die in attempting to evade arrest. But we do not live in an ideal world. While Abbas deplores terrorism, he wants to avoid a Palestinian civil war. And even if he was willing to launch one, with Abbas already struggling to control events on the ground, it's doubtful that the troops at his disposal would win.

Further, if defeating Palestinian terrorists with force alone was so easy, Israel would have done it long ago. Israel's military might has been vigorously applied to the occupied territories for nearly 40 years. It's chalked up some impressive tactical victories. But it has not succeeded in drying out the swamp of terror. Hamas and its fellow travelers are still around, which is why Sharon is busy encouraging Abbas to fight them.

Abbas deserves a chance to see if his way will work better, with the caveat that he must be prepared after the Palestinian legislative elections to forcefully confront those individuals who continue to engage in terror. It is in Israel's interest to see that Abbas is fortified with development aid and encouraged to carry out internal reforms, as well as to ensure that the Palestinian security forces loyal to him are strengthened in order for him to be able to carry out this task.

It is also in Israel's interest to ensure that these upcoming elections go as smoothly as possible. With its departure from Gaza, Israel will not be able to impede the contests in that region. But it could decide—as Sharon has said—to make it impossible for Palestinian voters in East Jerusalem to cast ballots or for candidates, campaign workers, and voters to move from town to town in the West Bank. If such Israeli impediments are put in place, they would delegitimize any victory that secular nationalist candidates might achieve over Hamas candidates, thereby strengthening the hand of the very terrorists that Israel seeks to weaken. They would also shatter the calm that allowed Israel to withdraw quietly from Gaza.

If the Bush Administration has been less than enthusiastic about Sharon's views of the Palestinian elections, it's because the White House has been pursuing the Sharonization of militants operating in areas under American control. Kurdish and Shiite militias have not been forced to disband in Iraq, yet that hasn't stopped representatives of those groups from running in elections and winning top positions in the current government. If the U.S. demanded that the armed supporters of these candidates lay down their weapons before their leaders could assume power, it must have done so in a whisper.

Hamas candidates did well in two earlier rounds of municipal elections. Lo and behold, they have found it necessary to work with Israelis at the local level in order to deal with mundane issues like sewage and water. And their Israeli counterparts have been willing to talk to them. This kind of practical contact is a long way from having terrorists beat their spears into pruning hooks, but perhaps it points to a way forward.

The Bush Administration should encourage Sharon to let Abbas see if he can duplicate this process at the national level of Palestinian politics. If it succeeds, Israel will be more secure, and Palestinian society will be more stable. If it fails, Israel will still have ample military strength upon which it can rely.